

the  
**WINEMAKERS**  
co-op

**2022 Harvest Report**

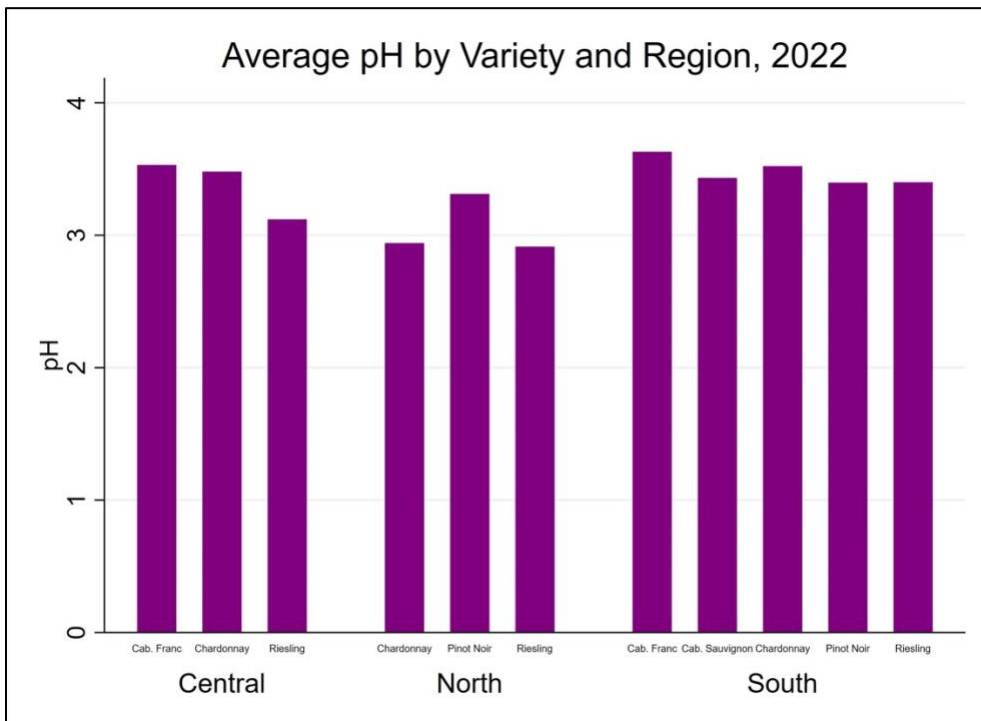
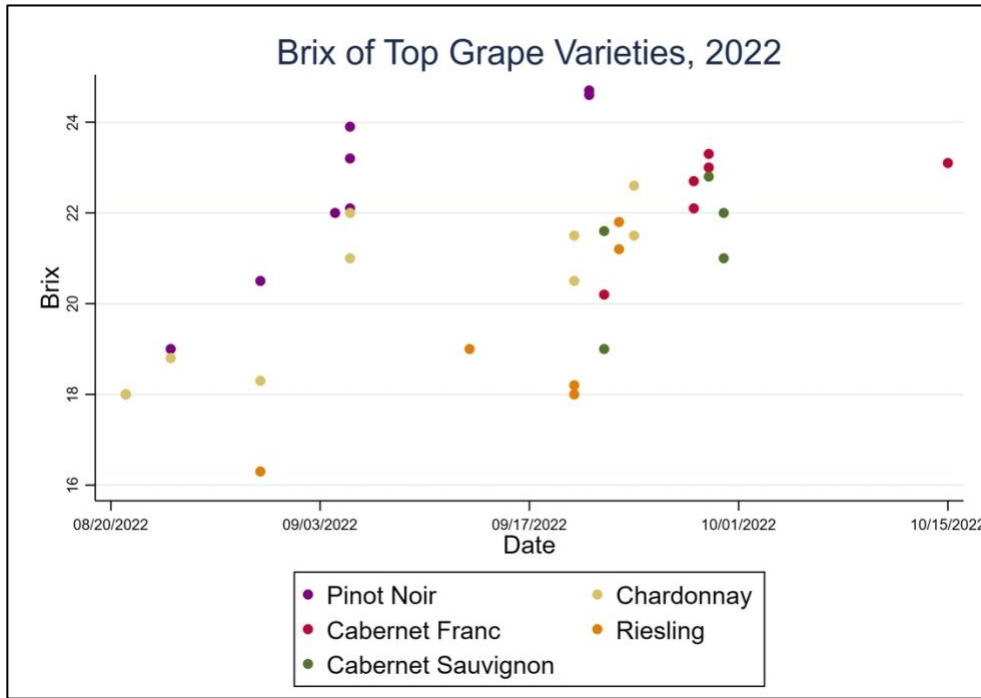
The Winemakers Co-Op annual harvest report strives to capture as much data as possible from each harvest to educate and inform the wine community. We invite all Garden State vitis vinifera grape growers to participate, please [email us](#) if you'd like to contribute.

**Harvest Data**

A look at our member wineries 2022 harvest by variety; totaling 279 tons. Cabernet Franc leads the way with just over 48 tons harvested, Cabernet Franc is a grape variety growing in stature in the northeast. Despite ranking 8<sup>th</sup> by tonnage, Blaufränkisch is only grown by one member – Beneduce Vineyards, who specializes in the grape.

<u>Grape Variety</u>	<u>Harvest Weight (tons)</u>
Cabernet Franc	48.01
Merlot	35.15
Chardonnay	35.1
Cabernet Sauvignon	32.8
Pinot Noir	17.62
Riesling	16.71
Sauvignon Blanc	16.4
Blaufränkisch	15.6
Syrah	14.39
Pinot Gris	10.85
Viognier	6.45
Petit Verdot	5.83
Gewürztraminer	5.5
Semillon	5.5
Malbec	3.6
Grenache	2.6
Albariño	2.4
Sangiovese	2.0
Tempranillo	0.6
Counoise	0.52
Petite Sirah	0.5
Pinot Blanc	0.3
Pinot Meunier	0.2

A look at Brix and pH harvest data from our members through the peak growing season. Due to the warm weather and drought conditions, many recorded record high range Brix levels this year. In southern NJ some completed harvest before the end of September, for the first time ever – while one of our northern NJ wineries wrapped up on October 7, their earliest harvest finish by a full week.



## New Jersey 2022 Harvest Summary

Across the state the 2022 vintage is being hailed as one with great potential. A mild winter generally led to early bud break, in the latter half of April – May 1. Spring frosts were largely avoided in southern and northern regions, while the central part of the state was hit with two damaging May frost events. The defining elements of the 2022 harvest season were a warm, dry summer and drought – with drought conditions declared in central and northern NJ. Drip irrigation and hand watering were deployed for certain susceptible varieties, and for young vines. Hurricane Ian’s remnants ripped through the state in early October – those that paused harvest were rewarded with sunny, warm days for wrapping up the season. Spotted lanternfly populations varied with the central part of the state being the worst impacted; while birds menaced the northern growers; likely due to the severe drought conditions.

### Regional Overviews

#### Southern New Jersey

Todd Wuerker, Hawk Haven Vineyard

The season started with a few big winter storms; then weather turned very mild during late winter/early spring, leading to early bud break. Early May storms delivered two weeks of blustery conditions and wind gusts over 20 mph. Fortunately, frost was avoided; however, untied or loose canes incurred broken or damaged new shoots; and conditions made it difficult to get early sprays out in the vineyard.

Fairly wet conditions continued throughout early summer and into fruit set and the first of three stages of berry development. As the temperature rose so did disease pressure from both powdery and downy mildew. Cool weather started to push growth stages back further, pointing to a late harvest season. The rain dried up in late June, just in time for the second stage of berry development, lag phase, where berry growth slows and acid concentrations hit their highs.

July brought the 3rd phase of berry development, and rainfall all but dried up. Given the wet spring, it was essential for the rain to cease at this time to have any semblance of a good season. Veraison started on July 27th, in the earliest ripening varieties - Pinot Noir and Tempranillo.



Tempranillo on the vine at Hawk Haven Vineyard

Ample sunshine pushed ripening levels back up to an ideal point. Some areas of southern New Jersey avoided summer thunderstorms and did not record measurable rain for over two months during the summer months.

We began harvest on Aug 21st. Most varieties were harvested earlier than average and with high sugars and acids. Intermittent rain fell throughout September; in some cases, sugar accumulation began outpacing phenolic ripeness. Some wineries were able to finish harvest before the end of September for the first time ever. Most wineries

have reported better than average aromas, flavors, and structure. One vineyard manager said, "Tropical storm Ian managed to impact the region dropping over 6 inches in some isolated areas. Wineries that chose to wait out the storm were rewarded by dry weather once again to end the month of October."

Throughout the region, spotted lanternfly impact varied; with some vineyards reporting over 100 flies per plant during the latter part of the season while others, primarily in the farthest south locations, saw none.

### Central New Jersey

Mark Carduner, Working Dog Winery

Bud break started in the final week of April 2022. The winter had been mild so budbreak should



A healthy Cabernet Franc cluster at Working Dog Winery

have occurred two weeks earlier, but there were cool temperatures in early April. Unfortunately, early May saw two significant frost events that caused tangible damage to more sensitive blocks. Other vinifera at higher elevations were spared. A spectacular growing season ensued with clear skies and below average rainfall. Central New Jersey received about half typical average rainfall. The state declared a drought for the region by midsummer. Historically the average precipitation in Robbinsville, NJ is 4.24" in August and 4.13" in September. The totals for 2022 were 2.5" in August and 2.43" in September. Drip irrigation and manual watering of all plants under three years of age was necessary. Watering all vinifera in drier blocks would have been helpful to increase brix in those stressed vines.

Picking began in the last week of August for Pinot Gris. Working Dog Winery picked Riesling, Chardonnay and Viognier the second and third weeks of September, only slightly earlier than their historical average.

After a rapid start in August, sugars and acids moved more slowly in

September because of the drought. All whites were picked prior to the arrival of hurricane Ian's remnants. Eight days of sunny dry weather following the storm, allowed plenty of time to pick all the vinifera reds. Cabernet Franc sugar levels reached 24 brix. Picking was complete by October 14th before the next rain event. Late ripening varieties were picked during the fourth week of October.

Unlike other locations in the state, central New Jersey was largely unaffected by birds, such as starlings. On the other hand, spotted lanternflies peaked during the summer. Spraying was required every two weeks during the growing season to limit damage.

### Northern New Jersey

John Cifelli, Unionville Vineyard

After a mild winter, a mid-April cold snap slowed down sap flow and caused some damage to sensitive varieties. Frosts were largely avoided with early vinifera varieties breaking around May 1. June was a little below normal, temperature-wise. In fact, it was the first June, July, or August that was below normal since June 2019. Then, the heat was turned up in July and August, and

beginning in late June we experienced regionalized drought conditions that were most persistent and impactful from western Hunterdon County into northern Monmouth and further north into Somerset. There was no penetrating rainfall in this part of the state for many weeks, over a month in some places. A severe drought was declared here in August, with other parts of the north in less impactful drought categories. At the same time, we recorded a top 5 hottest July in the north.

Sugars spiked as harvest approached, and many growers recorded higher range brix levels. Several Pinot Noir growers harvested at 24 or 25 brix. Harvest arrived early for some and on time for others, with Burgundy varieties being picked generally between 8/23 and 9/20. Intermittent rain events became increasingly frequent as September progressed, before the remnants of Hurricane Ian delivered several days of rain and clouds. 2-5" of rain fell across the first five days of October, and the dreary weather set up a below average October, temperature-wise. Many growers paused picking, waiting for a stretch of drier, warmer weather on the backside of Ian.



Bird damage at Unionville Vineyards

Spotted lanternfly had various impacts. It's distribution and cycles do not yet seem to be discernable. Birds were a much more impactful pest this year, reported as "worst in memory" for several growers. Likely, the birds were driven by hunger/thirst caused by the drought, as they were first reported as high impact in the severe drought area, before being noticed in other parts of the north as well.

*Compiled December 2022 by Danna Shapiro, Executive Director, The Winemakers Co-Op*